

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 and 26-37 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 17, 26 and 29 are independent claims.

By this Amendment, independent claims 1, 17, 26 and 29 are amended to recite additional features disclosed in the specification at, for example, Fig. 3 and paragraphs [0061] and [0062]. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-17 and 26-37 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0156923 to Tanimoto in view of JP 2002-108737 to Masahiro and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,597,307 to Redford. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1, 17, 26 and 29 are amended to recite additional features, as outlined above. In particular, claim 1 is amended to recite "the first circuit is configured to activate in response to insertion of the portable operation member to a first depth into the opening of the interface unit, and the second circuit is configured to activate in response to a mechanical operation that further inserts the same portable operation member to a second depth in the opening of the interface unit, the second depth being greater than the first depth." Claims 17, 26 and 29 are amended to recite similar features. The applied references do not disclose and would not have rendered obvious the subject matter recited in the claims, as amended.

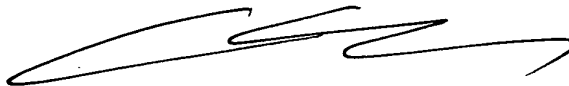
In particular, Tanimoto does not disclose and would not have rendered obvious inserting a same portable operation member at two different depths to activate two different circuits, respectively. Thus, Tanimoto does not disclose and would not have rendered obvious the above-quoted feature as recited in claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 17, 26 and 29. Masahiro and Redford do not cure the deficiencies of Tanimoto.

For at least the above reasons, claims 1, 17, 26 and 29 are patentable over the applied references. Claims 2-16, 27-28 and 30-37 are each patentable at least in view of the patentability of their respective base claims, as well as for additional features they recite. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-17 and 26-37 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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